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Curriculum Committee Minutes

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UMM CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

2010-11 MEETING #18 Minutes

April 20, 2011, 8:00 a.m., 113 Imholte

Present: Cheryl Contant (chair), Clare Dingley, Molly Donovan, Janet Ericksen, Mark Fohl, Sara Haugen, Michael Korth, Pareena Lawrence, Leslie Meek, Ian Patterson, David Roberts, Gwen Rudney, Jeri Squier, Elizabeth Thoma, Tisha Turk

Absent: Tara Greiman

Visiting: Nancy Helsper, Heather James

In these minutes: General Education Review Process

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES April 13, 2011

MOTION (Thoma/Patterson) to approve the April 13, 2011 minutes. Motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

2. General Education Review Process

Contant stated that she anticipated the General Education Review Subcommittee will have a report done no later than July 1. The report will consist of an introduction, the typologies presented, guiding principles and models the group has identified, classic and innovative approaches, and unsolicited comments and recommendations. The appendices will provide in tabular format a comparison of the general education programs at the Morris 14 and COPLAC schools.

The Curriculum Committee will review the report in the fall and conduct campus-wide discussions to solicit input before deciding on a proposal to bring forward to Campus Assembly for review and approval. The general discussions would take place late fall to spring semester of 2011-12, with implementation to take place fall 2013, with the next catalog cycle.

Roberts suggested sending out something asking for preliminary comments on general education before the end of the current semester. That could speed up the process and keep the timeline from slowing down. It would also narrow options down a bit. Ericksen stated that she didn't think open-ended questions would be helpful. Something like Survey Monkey might be helpful, but there may not be time to prepare a survey in the short time remaining in the semester. Lawrence agreed and stated that only people who feel strongly would respond. Korth added that at the conference that he and others attended on general education, he recalls how long and how much care other schools had put into designing surveys to determine what specific questions needed to be asked to make them successful. It can't be done in a week. Turk asked what the timeline was for the discussion on the student learning outcomes. That may be the closest analog. Contant answered that the Curriculum Committee began presenting a draft proposal to campus groups in late spring of 2009. By the end of fall 2009 conversations had taken place with several campus committees, MCSA members, and open forums. As a result of those conversations, another draft was prepared and brought to the Curriculum Committee and was finally approved at the March 3, 2010 meeting of the Campus Assembly. The general education review subcommittee is doing background research and data collection. The Curriculum Committee needs to get a lot of input as quickly as possible on the options. Some campuses that did large general education surveys were two to twenty times the size of UMM. Morris is small enough to do face-to-face conversations. Roberts stated that he did not mean for a preliminary survey to be a substitute for a full-blown survey. It would be interesting to find out who are the potential campus leaders on this issue. It might also catch a few seniors with the broadest perspective who are about to leave. It might speed things up and prevent us from making a wrong turn in the fall.

Thoma suggested that the best response rate from students might occur if the survey were attached to the classroom evaluations. If attached to something already required, it will generate a better turnout. Ericksen added that it might also work to have the survey done in classes. Lawrence stated that seniors have gone through four years of general education and would be a great audience to give input.

Thoma strongly encouraged that a survey of seniors be done in the spring for students. Freshmen are too new and would only have been in the system for a short time if it is done in the fall semester. Dingley disagreed and stated that first-year students are thoroughly given an explanation about general education and might know more when they do a survey. Ericksen agreed that it may be interesting to get the perspective of new students to see if we really are getting the message across about general education. Patterson stated that as much as incoming freshmen may have a better idea of the goals of general education, seniors would be in a better position to answer whether those goals were followed through. They are two very different populations. To get both sides might be the best option.

Contant stated that, as someone who does, writes, and loves surveys, she knows all the things that are wrong with them. Surveys will tell us what people think about the current program but won't tell us what will work in the future. While we might get some reactions to our current program, we would have pretty significant biases from those responses. It could be used as a one tool to use to answer short preliminary questions with narrative answers about what they think is going on, what their hopes/dreams/aspirations were, and whether they felt they were met. We would need to be careful to not say that the thirty people who respond to it represent the campus.

Helsper stated that the Assessment of Student Learning website has about ten years of general education survey results that have been done with our seniors. These results might be helpful.

[\[http://www.morris.umn.edu/committees/asl/gened.html#gened\]](http://www.morris.umn.edu/committees/asl/gened.html#gened)

Lawrence stated that if we do an open-ended question preliminary survey, we would have to draft those questions and conduct the survey the first week of May. Timing makes a difference on what you collect. Also vital are how you ask, what you ask, and when you ask. Contant suggested that an alternative to the preliminary survey would be to assign each Curriculum Committee member to meet with four people and have a conversation about general education. Roberts stated that it was a fine substitute. Ericksen stated that if you pick four people to talk to, you can choose the people who will give you any results that you want. Rudney suggested that everyone say "We will be doing a lot of work on the general education program next year. Just to get us started, we are trying to gather some initial information and initial statements that invite the community into the process a little bit sooner." Otherwise, we can begin next fall. Contant asked Rudney to draft the four open-ended questions that Contant could send out via email. Dingley suggested using the word "dialog" rather than "survey" since a survey implies analysis.

The Revised Process for General Education Review is as follows:

- I. Subcommittee report by July 1, 2011. White paper on alternatives and trends in GenEd nationally (tentative outline below)
 - A. Introduction
 1. Process and approach to subcommittee work
 2. Distinctive qualities and learning outcomes at UMM
 3. Purpose of report – providing a summary of current trends in general education nationally and some particularly useful models or examples for the campus to discuss and respond to
 - B. Typologies of GenEd
 1. Three general typologies
 2. Principles and an example of each
 - C. Models identified
 1. Classic
 2. Innovative (award winning, fascinating, possible links to UMM)
 - D. Unsolicited comments from the subcommittee regarding GenEd review at UMM
 - E. Appendices: Morris 14 and COPLAC schools GenEd programs in tabular form
- II. Rationale for Review: Why do a GenEd review now? (rearticulated mission statement; new learning outcomes; and accreditation progress report due in 2015 on general education and assessment)
- III. How will the UMM campus community conduct this review?
 - A. Curriculum Committee (CC) will be the governance committee to lead this conversation
 - B. Provide subcommittee report to the campus for review and discussion and provide purpose statement for outline of report so people know what the subcommittee will include

- C. Collect evidence of faculty (including P&A instructors) and students' current understanding/perception of our GenEd requirements (by way of such things as short preliminary questions, Fall Faculty Retreat, survey, campus forums) - this will take place spring through early fall of 2011
- D. CC will decide what, if anything, needs to be done and by what process. Process will be sent to Assembly for review and approval by spring 2012 with adoption of new GERs to go into effect fall 2013.

The Curriculum Committee will hold its last meeting of the semester on April 27.

Adjourned 9:05 a.m.

Submitted by Darla Peterson